

Rhode Island Litter Task Force

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Minutes for October 16, 2003 Meeting

Meeting called to order at 3:10 p.m.

Present:

Sally Turner, Groundwork Providence; Geoff DiCenso, RIACC; Lynn Ruggeri, RIACC/RCC; Barry Schiller, Sierra Club; Tom Getz, DEM; Bob Fleury, PRA; Terri Bisson, DEM.

1. **Minutes** – Approved meeting minutes of 9/25/03
2. **Litter Survey Update** – 6 completed surveys received to date. Terri will contact Eugenia to see if Audubon is still planning to analyze results. Barry will pass out survey to NP Environmental Committee. Sally will grab survey from website and complete. Geoff spoke to Anita SanAntonio of RIFDA. Anita has talked to a couple of chambers of commerce and they are willing to help.
3. **Guest Speaker:** Sally Turner, Executive Director of Groundwork Providence (GP). Main points of discussion:
 - The purpose of GP is to build sustainable communities through joint environmental action. They work very closely with neighborhood residents to solve local environmental problems. They work mostly in Providence, but have expanded to Pawtucket. They are looking at expanding to more of Providence County in the long run.
 - One of the more successful programs is the green teams which started from the DEM's Youth Litter Corps program. GP now has 50 teams (from 4 originally). Teams are funded by RI Housing and employ mostly low-income high school youths. Cleaning vacant lots represents sixty-five percent of the work the teens do. Also provided education to the teens to help them solve environmental problems in their neighborhoods.
 - GP was previously affiliated with Keep America Beautiful as Keep Providence Beautiful. The KAB mission became too narrow for the work they began to do (brownfields redevelopment, recycling, etc.) In addition, KAB required affiliates to complete complex photometric surveys to document littering rates, etc. Keep Providence Beautiful is now a program within GP.
 - Providence has a major problem with improper trash set outs, causing litter and rat problems. GP coordinates 26 volunteer neighborhood captains who teach people how to set out trash and recyclables properly. The captains photograph improper trash setouts, follow trash trucks and issue warning tickets to those who set out improperly. After 3 warnings DPW levies a fine. The program is paid for from a \$35,000 grant from RIRRC which funds materials, a staff person and training and recognition for captains.
 - As KPB, the organization used to provide downtown merchants with an opportunity to adopt public trashcans. Merchants would receive the container with their logo on it and would be responsible for emptying. The program was not very successful. Many merchants would empty them infrequently or stopped altogether. They plan to revive the program with the Douncity Merchants Association. However, this time the merchants will pay a fee to sponsor the container and the Association will be responsible for emptying them.

Members

Audubon Society of RI • Buckeye Brook • Watershed Assn. • Clean Water Action • RI Assn. of Conservation Commissions • RI Dept. of Environmental Management • RI Food Dealers Assn. • Sierra Club of RI • Woonasquatucket River Watershed Assn.

- Sally is interested in GP becoming a member of the litter task force and also interested in reviewing the adequacy of litter laws and local ordinances.

2. Other

- The group agreed to look at some local litter ordinances and possibly come up with a model ordinance. Geoff will obtain litter ordinances from Cumberland and Burrillville, Frank from PRA communities and Sally from Providence.
- Tom Getz agreed to draft a letter to the Solid Waste Plan Committee to request that the solid waste plan include a connection to litter and litter issues.
- Tom will add a link from the litter web site to the GP site

3. Next Meeting: Thursday, November 20, 3 to 4 PM at DEM Headquarters, 235 Promenade Street, Conference Room A, 4th Floor. Agenda items will include:

- Membership lists
- Finalize letter Eugenia wrote to business

Meeting adjourned 4:20 p.m.